

An Open Letter From the Secretary of the Missionary Board of the Brethren Church

Very frequently contributors to the mission cause request that their names shall be withheld from publication in connection with offerings. I highly appreciate the sentiment that prompts such requests, and yet for the sake of avoiding all suspicion as to the proper use and disposition of missionary moneys, I think all receipts and expenditures should be published regularly, in detail. There are two sides to the question of publishing or not publishing the names of donors. I am sure that withholding the names is gospel, as Christ disparaged the parading of our gifts; on the other hand, seeing what one gives may move others to give something, or more than they otherwise would. I think however, the genuine gospel way the better, consequently will hereafter only give the *initials* and *post office* address of donors unless otherwise instructed by the donor. All will thus be able to tell whether their gifts are properly credited or not.

Because of the publication of all accounts I do not usually send acknowledgement of receipts by mail, as it would necessitate some work and expense to do that. I shall cheerfully do so however, if requested.

One other thought I want to mention. In EVANGELIST No. 45, Brother Lyon expresses a thought I desire to emphasize. He says:

"I am sorry that the Mission has thus become localized, or rather sectionalized. It ought not to be so. I hope it will not be so long. There is a better way. Let us pray that it may be unanimously adopted at the next National Conference. How much better it would be to have a systematic plan for giving; then have all money sent to one treasury and let the General Board distribute according to the various needs."

It matters not much what conference adopts if the members disregard it afterwards as has been too much the way in many important matters.

Concerning the General Mission Board it by vote in a regular way decided that all moneys should be sent the secretary, and by him to be forwarded to the treasurer, and to be paid out by him only as orders were drawn by the secretary. This rule has been strictly adhered to with such moneys as came into the hands of the officials, but a considerable number of the donors have thus far failed to comply with the request of the Board. I do not at all impugn their motives, and do not crave any more work than I now have, but to say the least, it is irregular to send money direct to the several missionaries, and it will prevent the proper systematizing of the work. It is the Board that makes the agreements with the missionaries, and it is to the Board that they look to for their support, and the Board is delegated by conference to do the work.

The amounts to be expended at each mission point are stipulated; friends sending in money direct to the missionaries do not know whether the Board owes them anything or

not. They may send their money to one when it is needed by another. Small as our work is as yet, and with the character of those who now occupy our mission stations there is of course no danger of any abuse, but as the work expands, and changes are made our present loose, irregular methods are open to abuse. Conference should only elect such persons to the several offices as are responsible, and if deemed necessary put them under bonds and then the membership should regard the functions of each. If this is not to be done there is not much use for conference and less for "Official Boards."

Personally, I do not care for the position of secretary and should like to be relieved from it honorably at any time, but I have a great desire to see our conferences become effective, and our work properly systematized no matter who the officials may be. In this I believe that I express the view of every member of the Missionary Board and of the missionaries themselves.

JACOB C. CASSEL.

Sec. M. B. of the B. C.

Church News

Our Western Work

DISTRICT CONFERENCE WORK

I have sent the minutes to Bro. Gnagey for publication, and a card to each pastor for help to defray expenses.

This little work will greatly help to advertise our cause and create an interest in our conferences. I am sure you will see the good results at our next conference. Please attend to this at once. Bro. Hixson is at work and we will hear good news from him. Bro. Gillin comes to Falls City. Bro. Harrison sends out an add, of the meetings, with a free page cut of the preacher. We are glad to see it. Some years ago when I advertised that way, there was a great out cry, and criticisms by wholesale. Now we have quite a number to keep us company, and do not feel so lonesome. The fact is, the church is just beginning to appreciate the value of the printing press, she ought to use the press more.

OUR TENT BOOK

The tent is back in our district. It has a history that will be written of later. It has done good work. An effort was made to capture it from us, but it is here, and the district evangelist and myself understand the matter and will make use of it next summer.

Those who desire tent work will keep this in mind, and also remember that while the expense of using it will be nominal, there will be some. There are places in the district in which good can be done in this way, as there has been good done in the past. It will take some of you six months to decide about it, so I mention it now, and when ready you can consult A. J. or myself.

THE PREACHERS DEAD LINE

The St. Joe News says some good things

on the "Dead Line" in the ministry, "a man is not wise because he is old, neither is a man a fool because he is young. Yet age ought to bring wisdom, and there should be no dead line for preachers. Let them study outside their theological ruts, and stop turning the old barrel over so often, and the dead line will be obliterated. The editorial is so pointed I give it entire in place of cutting as I first intended:

The saying that the age of fifty is the dead line in the ministry of the Gospel seems to be a correct one, and has recently been emphasized by the Episcopal convention meeting in Washington City. The house of bishops nominated Reverend Calvin Hall, arch-deacon of Wilmington, Del., to the position of missionary bishop to Kyoto, Japan, but the house of deputies refused to confirm the nomination, simply on the ground that Dr. Hall was past fifty years of age, having attained the "green old" age of fifty-two years. There are highest testimonials on file as to the character of Doctor Hall and his splendid ability and past labor, but all this goes for nothing in the ministry, it would seem. While in commercial and professional life he would simply have arrived at his prime, in the ministry he is supposed to be in his dotage. No man attains to the rank of commodore or admiral in the United States navy, or in the regular army to the position of general, while under fifty years of age, and yet a general in charge of the Christian forces who is fifty years of age is supposed to be too old for wisdom or activity. In no other department of human activity is such folly as this known. In truth few men are fit for the ministry under fifty years of age. Few have the knowledge, the discretion, the patience or the development of character necessary for that exalted position until they have attained to that age. Nothing, perhaps, has done more for the injury of the pulpit in the United States in the last ten or twenty years than the youthful crudities in the pulpit, the exultation of the boy preacher over the man preacher, and the drivel and nonsense that has emanated from the pulpit in consequence. The time was when the white-haired pastor was the honored man in the community; nowadays it is the tow-headed boy preacher that takes precedent. One would think that at least in the office of bishop a maturity of fifty years would be required, but instead of that, according to the house of deputies of the Episcopal council, that age is too great for a man to give character and wisdom to the direction of the work.

A SOUP GOSPEL

Who preaches that kind of a gospel? I did not know any one in the Brethren church preached that men should be saved by soup, yet there have been more assertions made recently that would lead one to think that such was the case. Of course, I know what such things mean, and in due time will expose some of them. The Brethren church, in my judgment, does not preach a soup gospel, but if essential she gives it. Luther prayed for the healing of his co-worker, and then gave him some soup. We preach Christ and Him crucified, for the healing of the people, and if we find those around us needing help, and we have it, we give it them. That is what rescue work is, and people ought to be ashamed to fight it. They can't fight it without fighting against the Word, and without repudiating the word of Christ, and yet some lazy old souls, their mouths greasy with fat pork, and their shins toasting before a hot fire, never knowing a care or want, pour cold water on this, the Lord's work, well, their souls will get where